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C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 001879

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SA/INS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/01/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [CE](#) [LTTE](#)

SUBJECT: TIGERS BAG ANOTHER INTELLIGENCE OFFICER WHILE  
KILLINGS CONTINUE IN THE EAST

REF: A. COLOMBO 812

[B](#). COLOMBO 1800

[C](#). COLOMBO 454

Classified By: DCM James F. Entwistle. Reason: 1.4 (B,D)

#### SUMMARY

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[1](#). (C) On the evening of October 29, an assassin shot and killed Sri Lankan Army (SLA) LTCOL T.R. Meedin as the officer sat in his car. This killing follows the May 31 murder of another high ranking Tamil speaking intelligence officer MAJ T.N. Muthalif. Police arrested four suspects on October 30 amid speculation surrounding the affiliation and motivation of the perpetrators. Some authorities view this latest killing as a Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) response to the October 10 attack on senior LTTE cadres Bhanu and Keerthi. In the eastern district of Batticaloa, the LTTE fought members of COL Karuna's LTTE breakaway faction, the Tamil National Force (TNF), on October 30 and severely injured two women living behind a police Special Task Force (STF) camp in a grenade attack that same day. END SUMMARY

#### A KILLING

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[1](#)2. (C) On October 29, LTCOL Meedin was found shot to death in his car after leaving his Colombo home to meet an unidentified acquaintance. He died from those wounds a few hours later.

#### WHO SHOT T.R.? AND WHY?

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[1](#)3. (C) Press, police and military contacts have divergent theories on the killing. Contacts in the security forces speculate that the LTTE, which has killed 64 members of military intelligence since the Cease-fire Agreement (CFA), may have assassinated Meedin, perhaps in retaliation for the October 10 attack on LTTE district military head Bhanu and district intelligence chief Keerthi (Reftel B). Some press accounts of the killing suggested that the killer might have been hired by the LTTE, rather than an LTTE cadre himself. An alternate theory is that Meedin's work often involved informers, one of them could have turned on him or delivered him to an LTTE hitman. Press speculation points to a possible business deal gone sour in which his wealthy associate had underworld ties.

#### MEANWHILE BACK AT THE COAST

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[1](#)4. (U) On October 30, the LTTE and Karuna's TNF fighters clashed in LTTE-controlled territory near the village of Vaharai in Batticaloa district with casualties on both sides. The pro-LTTE website TamilNet accused Sri Lankan intelligence operatives of being in company with the TNF renegades. Later that day two men on motorcycle threw grenades at a house behind an STF camp seriously injuring a mother and daughter. Mounted attacks on motorbike are standard for the LTTE and recently, women seen "collaborating" have been intimidated or attacked.

#### COMMENT

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[1](#)5. (C) The violence in Batticaloa district has become a social norm, marching to a steady beat. We do not expect the murder of Meedin will change the GSL policy of formally respecting the CFA. That said, the TNF or some other anti-LTTE force could exact revenge. Conventional wisdom paints the LTTE as cash rich and manpower poor since the 2002 CFA. Using local criminal gangs would add a layer of deniability to Tiger CFA violations and conserve their hard-core Black Tiger cadres for high value targets like the Foreign Minister. If the LTTE did use hired killers, it could indicate not just a manpower shortage, but an opportunity for security forces, since contract killers are far more likely to talk to police than take a cyanide capsule.  
LUNSTEAD